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languages in general, the nature of dialects, on the Frankish Court language during the Old High German period, on the one literary language of the Middle High German period, SOCIN quotes the various opinions directly from the authors, or presents them in his own words—which is quite impartially done. His position is the comfortable one of MONTAIGNE “Que sais-je?” A non-believer in the existence of the one Middle High German written language, must be puzzled, yet pleased, by the heading of the second chapter of the first book: “Die mittelhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” and of the third chapter of the same book: “Das Wiederaufleben der Schrift-dialekte im 14ten Jahrhundert.” What a short-lived affair must have been that “allgemeine Hof- und Dichtersprache, die durch ihren Einfluss auf die Prosa zur mittelhochdeutschen Schriftsprache sich erweitert und als solche in Niederdeutschland, theilweise auch in den Niederlanden, Geltung erlangt” (p. 112). In the thirteenth century it is a great institution, in the fourteenth occurs its complete disintegration. In the fifteenth century, the struggle of the dialects and that of the various “Kanzleisprachen” with one another and with the dialects were resumed, struggles that were to last three hundred years.

SOCIN calls Middle High German a literary language, Middle German, a literary dialect (p. 116). Does M. H. G. here include ‘Oberdeutsch’ (South German) and Middle German, as it generally does? If so, it is a misstatement, not original with SOCIN.—For a popular book, the author’s style is very clumsy.

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Von Luther bis Lessing von F. KLUGE, Strassburg. Trübner. 1888.

This taking title belongs to a collection of philological essays, disconnected, but all dealing with certain important points in the New High German period of the language. “Dies Büchlein will keine deutsche Sprachgeschichte sein; zur Beruhigung fachwissenschaftlicher Gemüter sei es gesagt,” says the author in the preface. But I venture to say, that if we are to have a history of the German language

we would rather have it from the author of the Etymological Dictionary with its excellent historical introduction than from anybody else.

The essays are written with a view to interest a larger public. In the unpretending book is a great deal of research that has yielded new points of view and new facts, hidden under a genial popular treatment. In the chapter on the South and Middle German word-stock, are some interesting and very valuable comparative word-lists chosen from various bible texts. They are in fact concordances of the early bible translations. No history of the language has ever so fully and correctly presented the relation of Latin to the literary language and to the dialects as is done in the chapters, “The Language of the church and of the People;” “Latin and Humanism.” In the essay “Luther and the German Language,” KLUGE cannot be blamed for a little hit at SCHERER’s periods of three hundred years in the history of German literature. The contents of the rest of the book are indicated by the chapter-headings: “MAXIMILIAN and his ‘Kanzlei;’” “Authors and Printers;” “Literary Language and Dialects in Switzerland;” “Low German and High German;” “South Germany and the Catholics.”

H. C. G. B.

ITALIAN LITERATURE IN BAVARIA.

The relations of Italian literature to the Bavarian court are discussed by Dr. K. von Reinhardtstoettner in the first volume of the *Jahrbuch für Münchener Geschichte*. Material for such a study is furnished abundantly by the accumulations of the Royal Library at Munich, in the shape of librettos, festival compositions, plays, and eulogies of the reigning family written by official court poets, theatrical managers and masters of ceremonies; with occasional sonnets from Italy, celebrating the liberality and enlightenment of the foreign ruler.

Thus there is little of literary value, nor are the poets themselves of wide reputation. The first writer known is Massimo Trojano, a Neapolitan, who describes, in 1568, the festi-